

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee from the Housing Allocations Task and Finish Group

The Group met twice to consider the draft Housing Allocations Policy and the effect on customers arising from the change in the way customers are assessed, from a 35 point system to a 4 band system.

The Group found the topic extremely interesting and discussed the policy in detail. Councillors were reassured that the four bands would not disadvantage existing customers on the waiting list and that the new system gave clarity to the position of individuals on the list.

It was recommended that existing tenants could benefit from a mechanism to transfer to a house that became available in another location and subject to ensuring the policy complies with the law officers will develop a mechanism for transfers.

Chorley is currently leading the way in adopting the 4 band system which is required by law. Other Local Authorities currently using the 2 band system are reviewing their arrangements to bring them in line. A particular benefit of this is that in difficult circumstances a customer from Chorley could be accommodated in a neighbouring borough.

Officers are mindful of the need to get an appropriate mix of customers in any one area and are working with housing providers and other partners to ensure any issues are resolved. Members discussed the small number of customers who, by their behaviour, have the duty owed to them by the Council revoked.

At the other end of the scale there are customers who have savings and or capital assets. It was recommended that a system should be devised to preclude customers with a certain level of savings and or capital assets from housing allocation to ensure more deserving customers are not disadvantaged.

The Group noted that the Policy will be reviewed in six months, in line with the inquiry recommendations monitoring.

Recommendation from the Chair

When the Policy has been finalised Members might find a Member Learning Hour useful on the Housing Allocations Policy and Choice Based Lettings.

Councillor Mike Devaney

Chair of the Housing Allocations Task and Finish Group